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DE RUEHB# #1079/01 2780803
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8826
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INFO RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 6945
RUEHGH/AMCONSUL SHANGHAI 5955
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 7270
RUEHGZ/AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU 1563
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 5961
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 8220

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 BEIJING 021079

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SENSITIVE

DEPT PASS USTR - KARESH, ROSENBERG
LABOR FOR OSHA - A/S FOULKE, J. DEMESME-GRAY
LABOR FOR ILAB - ZHAO, SCHOEPFLE, GATEWOOD
STATE ALSO FOR INR/B

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ELAB](#) [EMIN](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF OSHA A/S EDWIN G. FOULKE, JR. TO CHINA
SEPTEMBER 17-24, 2006

¶11. SUMMARY: DOL Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., led an OSHA delegation to China September 17-24 to attend the Third China International Forum on Work Safety and meet with officials of the State Administration for Work Safety (SAWS). Chinese Government presentations indicated that China's occupational safety and health priorities are in mining -- especially coal mining -- as well as emergency preparedness and chemical safety and construction. In private meetings, SAWS officials said they greatly valued cooperation with the USG, and that the U.S. Mine Safety Training program has been highly beneficial. SAWS seeks further cooperation, and will renew a request to send a Chinese chemical safety delegation to the United States in ¶2008. End Summary.

¶12. (U) Department of Labor Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health Edwin G. Foulke, Jr., visited China September 17-24 to attend the Third China International Forum on Work Safety and meet with officials of the State Administration for Work Safety (SAWS). He was accompanied by OSHA Coordinator for International Affairs Jacquelyn DeMesme-Gray and OSHA Regional Administrator Frank Strasheim.

THIRD CHINA INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON WORK SAFETY

¶13. (U) The SAWS and the International Labor Organization (ILO) co-hosted the Forum in collaboration with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company and the U.S.-based National Safety Council, September 19-21. Corporate Sponsors were Du Pont, Caterpillar, 3M, BASF and Bacou-Dalloz. The Forum included an exchange of experiences on work safety, safety practices of several leading corporations, corporate and government safety responsibility, protection of workers' safety from the perspective of economic and social sustainability, occupational safety and health strategies and programs, and emergency management. The Forum coincided with a work safety equipment exhibition. A/S Foulke delivered remarks on "Workplace Safety and Health in the United States." Carolyn Merrit, Chair and CEO of the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, gave a presentation on "Key Investigations that Help Industry Learn How to Prevent

Chemical Accidents." Although representatives from many industries participated in the Forum, coal mining was a major theme in most of the Chinese presentations.

¶4. (U) The Chinese Government showed high-level support for the Forum. Hua Jianmin, Secretary-General of China's State Council, and a member of the Communist Party Central Committee, gave the opening remarks. Chinese presenters stressed that work safety is essential in building a "socialist harmonious society," and outlined various high-level government initiatives to improve occupational safety and health, particularly in the coal industry. The Chinese Government reported that work-related accidents and fatalities for January-August 2006 dropped 11.3 and 10.7 percent compared to the same period in 2005, and by 13.6 and 25.5 percent in the coal sector. Chinese Government presentations indicated that China's occupational safety and health priorities were in mining, emergency preparedness, chemical safety and construction.

A/S FOULKE'S MEETING WITH SAWS VICE MINISTER LIANG JIAKUN

¶5. (U) Vice-Minister Liang hosted A/S Foulke, the OSHA delegation, Laboff and Labor Assistant for a lunch. Also present from SAWS were Bai Ran, Deputy Director General; Shi Yanping, Director of the International Cooperation Office; and Guan Shanyue of the SAWS General Affairs Office.

¶6. (SBU) A/S Foulke complimented Vice Minister Liang on the Forum and said each country has its own system for ensuring occupational safety and health. A/S Foulke described OSHA's cooperation with industry during the preparations for the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, and asked

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whether SAWS was actively involved in the preparation for the 2008 Olympics. Liang replied that SAWS is involved in planning traffic flow, routes, exits and signage for the Olympic site, and will inspect the site when it is complete to ensure that it has appropriate safety features and facilities. Normally, he said, public safety issues are handled by the Ministry of Public Security. Strasheim described OSHA's role in the recovery from Hurricane Katrina and asked whether SAWS played a similar role after China's recent typhoons. Liang said that natural disasters are handled by the Ministry of Civil Affairs. A/S Foulke described OSHA's role in preparation for possible disease pandemics. Liang said that the Ministry of Health has primary responsibility for pandemic prevention, response and treatment, although SAWS could play a role in the workplace.

¶7. (SBU) VM Liang praised the U.S. Department of Labor-funded project on coal mine safety in China. He said it has had a profound effect on the miners trained, and this has spread to other miners and to other mines beyond the pilot mine in Yangquan. He described it as the cutting edge of China's efforts to improve coal mine safety. Bai Ran said the Mine Safety program is extremely important to SAWS and that he hoped SAWS could continue its cooperation with USG agencies after the program ends next year in the area of work safety and health, whether in the coal industry or other sectors. He noted that the program has helped SAWS rescue and accident response measures, and not only in the coal industry. VM Liang also expressed a desire for OSHA to participate in SAWS's next safety exposition in 2008.

¶8. (SBU) A/S Foulke said that the United States continues to improve its own methods and, after recent mine accidents, is now giving more attention to upgrading personal locator and emergency oxygen supply equipment. We want to share this technology. A/S Foulke described some of OSHA's training facilities for general industry and construction safety, and said he sees many potential areas for U.S.-

China cooperation. Strasheim recalled his previous visit to China and asked whether SAWS still identified chemical safety as a priority area for further cooperation. Liang replied that SAWS placed top priority on the coal, chemical, fireworks and explosive sectors because these are directly within its mandate. Other sectors, such as construction and traffic safety, fall under the jurisdiction of other ministries.

¶19. (SBU) Shi Yanping noted that SAWS represents China on the International Association for Labor Inspection (IALI), and that she serves as IALI vice-Chair. She said that over 100 countries have joined IALI and that she hoped OSHA would participate. Jacquelyn DeMesme-Gray replied that the Department of Labor follows IALI and has participated in all of the International Labor Organization's annual conferences. Laboff asked whether the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MOLSS) also participates in IALI. Shi said that MOLSS and SAWS divide their efforts, with MOLSS representing China at the ILO.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH SAWS

¶10. (U) On September 22, SAWS Director Shi Yanping met informally with the OSHA delegation and Labor Assistant. Shi described the organization of SAWS's international directorate, and SAWS leadership's priorities for chemical safety. Shi clarified that the National Center for International Cooperation and Exchange on Work Safety is organized as a non-profit organization that receives special funding from SAWS, and works for, and under the loose direction of, the SAWS Directorate for International Cooperation. This Center conducts research, gathers information, and plans training and conferences. Regarding chemical safety, Shi said SAWS remains interested in sending a chemical safety delegation to the United States, adding that her agency intends to renew its request to the

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U.S. Department of Labor to send a delegation in 2008.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE (LIANG JIAKUN)

¶11. (U) Liang Jiakun has been Vice Minister and a member of the Communist Party leading group of SAWS since its elevation to Ministry status in February 2005. Liang was Deputy Administrator of SAWS from July 2003 to February 2005. Liang was born in Tianjin City in 1951. Liang is a coal mining expert, having graduated from the Shanxi Institute for Coal Management Cadres in 1989. Liang speaks little or no English, although he has traveled to the United States.

¶12. (U) Liang's previous positions are:

1973-75: Studied at the Department of Mining Construction, Shanxi Professional and Technical Institute

1975-1983: Technician, Associate Engineer, Designing Division, Fenxi Mining Bureau

1983-1992: Deputy Section Chief, Deputy Director, Engineer, Basic Construction Division, Fenxi Mining Bureau

(1987-1989: Studied Enterprise Management at Shanxi Institute for Coal Mine Management Cadres)

1992-1993: Deputy Director, China Unified Distribution Coal Mine Corporation

1993-97: Associate Researcher, Director, Senior Engineer, Production Preparation Division, Department of Production Coordination, Ministry of Coal

1997-98: Assistant Director General, Kailuan Mining Bureau

1998-2000: Assistant Supervisor, Department of Industry Management, State Administration of Coal Safety

2000-2001: Deputy Director General, Local Village-Town Coal Mine Regulation and Safety Supervision Office, State Administration of Coal Industry

2001-2003: Deputy Director General, Director General, Department Two of Coal Mine Safety Supervision of State Administration of Coal Mine Safety (SACMS).

¶13. A/S Foulke cleared this message.

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